Note: The Education Report can be viewed online at http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/news/report/

Issue No. 53

In The News

New, Greener Dr. Knox Middle School Officially Opens

Students Sing to Celebrate Vancouver 2010 Countdown

Fourth StrongStart BC Centre Opens in North Vancouver

Province Matches Funding for Raise-a-Reader Campaign

SFU Welcomes New Elementary School

Contact Information

Mailing Address:
PO Box 9045 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, B.C.
V8W 9E2

Telephone:
250-387-1977

Fax:
250-387-3200

E-mail:
minister.educ@gov.bc.ca

Links

- Media Room
- StrongStart BC
- LearnNow BC
- School Choices
- Healthy Schools
- ReadNow BC
- School District Visits

Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education

In just over a year, we will host the world at the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games. This is an exciting time for British Columbia as we prepare for the Countdown to 2010.

As part of the official Countdown to 2010 celebrations on February 12, schools across the country will sing 'O Canada' at 10:00 am PST in a tremendous expression of national pride and unity.

I encourage B.C. educators and students to mark this occasion with an official school countdown event. In addition to joining schools across the country in singing our national anthem, there are numerous other spirit-building activities schools can integrate into their celebrations, such as:

- Having students dress in red and white clothing;
- Holding a torch relay;
- Staging a "parade of nations";
- Creating flag posters to decorate the school;
- Organizing a school athletic tournament or fun run;
- Arranging for a local Olympian or Paralympian to speak at your school;
- Inviting local media to record the countdown celebrations.

I hope every school in British Columbia takes advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the Countdown to 2010. For more information and suggested activities, please visit www.sharingthedream.gov.bc.ca, a Ministry of Education component of the Vancouver 2010 Education Program.

Celebrating Literacy in B.C.

On January 9, Education Minister Shirley Bond celebrated the success of 2008 Raise-a-Reader Campaign with the Prince George Citizen, campaign volunteers and representatives from community literacy groups that will benefit from Raise-a-Reader funds. The Province contributed nearly $28,000 in matching funding to the Prince George campaign, and more than $886,000 to communities throughout B.C.

HOT TOPIC

The Foundation Skills Assessment is an important tool that helps the Province, school districts, schools and school planning councils to measure how students are doing in basic skills – reading comprehension, writing and numeracy – and to make plans for improving student achievement.

The FSA, which is developed by British Columbia educators, is administered each year to Grade 4 and 7 students in public and independent schools. The skills assessed are linked to the provincial curriculum and provincial performance standards.

FSA has been in place for almost 10 years and experts, including B.C.'s own Representative for Children and Youth, have found it to be a useful tool. The First Nations Education Steering Committee views the FSA as a useful tool for addressing Aboriginal student achievement. A number of boards of education and parent advisory committees have also expressed support for the FSA.

The FSA complements teaching practice by helping teachers, schools, the district and the province work together to meet the needs of our students.

In 2007-08, FSA administration was moved from May to February. For the first time, individual FSA results and the students' actual written answers were available to parents, teachers and schools by the end of March, in the same school year the test was taken. This provides an opportunity for discussions of student progress and paves the way for planning for individual student needs before the end of the school year.

The FSA is a part of government's accountability to the public and its responsibility to parents. Parents want to have as much information as possible about how their children are doing in school and how they can help their child improve.

Sharing the Dream Webcast Series

On February 20 at 11 a.m., join B.C. students from the Comox Valley when they welcome young entrepreneur, Michael Furdyk, as the next guest in the Sharing the Dream webcast series. Michael is a co-founder of the youth social action website TakingITGlobal and he will speak about global citizenship and how youth can take action to make their communities a better place.
Students from anywhere in Canada and the world can email questions during the live interview through www.sharingthedream.gov.bc.ca

The Sharing the Dream webcast series consists of six student-led webcast interviews related to the components of the Vancouver 2010 Education Program: Sport and Healthy Living, Culture, Sustainability, Olympism, Paralympism, and the overarching theme of global citizenship.